

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 15493

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINT, SHUM, UR
SUBJECT: DISSIDENTS AND REFUSENIKS OFFER TO ASSIST
U.S. CORRESPONDENTS FACING SLANDER CHARGE

SUMMARY: SLANDER CHARGE AGAINST U.S. CORRESPONDENTS
HAS AROUSED INTENSE INTEREST AMONG MOSCOW'S REFUSENIKS
AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS. SEVERAL HAVE OFFERED
ASSISTANCE, EITHER BY TESTIFYING AS DEFENSE WITNESSES
OR BY SHARING EXPERIENCES GAINED IN SLANDER SUITS
THEY HAVE FILED AGAINST SOVIET AUTHORITIES. END
SUMMARY.

1. REFUSENIKS AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS ARE
INTENSELY INTERESTED IN SLANDER CHARGES AGAINST
U.S. CORRESPONDENTS WHITNEY AND PIPER. THEIR
INTEREST HAS SEVERAL SOURCES: REALIZATION THAT
CHARGE STRIKES AT LINK WITH WESTERN CORRESPONDENTS,
WHICH IS CRUCIAL BOTH TO MAINTAINING SUPPORT ABROAD
AND TO ENSURING THEIR INFORMATION IS BROADCAST BACK
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INTO USSR BY WESTERN RADIO STATIONS; DESIRE TO
ENSURE THAT WHAT THEY VIEW AS TRUTH ABOUT
GAMSAKHURDIA CASE IS NOT DISCREDITED; DESIRE TO
DISCREDIT SOVIET GOVERNMENT.

2. ISAI GOLDSHTEIN AND HIS WIFE HAVE OFFERED TO BE
DEFENSE WITNESSES FOR WHITNEY AND PIPER, WHO

REPORTEDLY INTERVIEWED THE LATTER IN TBILISI AND FILED STORY ON WHICH SLANDER CHARGE IS BASED AT LEAST PARTLY ON WHAT SHE TOLD THEM. ISAI SAYS THAT A MONTH BEFORE TRIAL, MRS. GMSAKHURDIA TOLD HIM THAT HER HUSBAND HAD NOT RECALTED ON ANY ESSENTIAL PARTS OF HIS POSITION, ONLY ON TWO VERY SPECIFIC ELEMENTS (ONE OF WHICH INVOLVED A LETTER HE HAD WRITTEN CONCERNING A GERMAN GENERAL; THE OTHER WAS NOT SPECIFIED).

3. MOSCOW AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER MEMBER VLADIMIR ALBREKHT TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO HELP. ALBREKHT BELIEVES EXPERIENCE OF SLANDER CASE HE FILED AGAINST SOVIET AUTHORITIES FOR DECLARING AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AN ANTI-SOVIET ORGANIZATION MAY HAVE SOME RELEVANCE TO THEIR CASE.

4. ANOTHER REFUSENIK, IULY KASHAREVSKY, WHO EARLIER THIS YEAR FILED SLANDER SUIT AGAINST SOVIET CENTRAL TELEVISION AUTHORITIES FOR ANTI-SEMITIC BROADCAST, BELIEVES DOCUMENTATION HE PREPARED FOR SUIT MAY BE OF ASSISTANCE.

5. COMMENT: WE DO NOT KNOW HOW MANY OF THESE ASSISTANCE OFFERS HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO ATTENTION OF PIPER AND WHITNEY. REFUSENIK SOURCE WHO TOLD CONFIDENTIAL

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US ABOUT GOLDSSTEIN OFFER SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH CORRESPONDENTS ABOUT IT. TOON

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TAGS: PINT, SHUM, UR, US, (WHITNEY, CRAIG), (PIPER, HAROLD)
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